Proposed Extension and Internal Remodelling for Children's Centre – Highfields Community Primary School, Kettering

Design & Access Statement

This statement should be read in conjunction with the associated building plans and elevations depicting detailed elements.

Assessment

- **Physical** – the new extension to the existing School will be easily recognisable as the Nursery / Children's Centre, especially for persons visiting the building for the first time. One of the main priorities of the design and initial assessment of the site was to provide a "welcoming" environment for the children and parents, trying to replicate the family environment as far as possible. It is seen as essential to encourage persons from their homes into the local community and the design of the extension with the new reception assists with this.

- **Social** – This Children's Centre is to be based upon the existing site of the Primary School. This site is within a 70% area of disadvantage. To meet the core offer of a Children's Centre the Centre will be working in partnership with Kettering Sure Start and other local service providers and also with the local preschool who currently rent space from the school and will in future rent rooms that form part of the Children's Centre. We envisage families attending for small group work or appointments to meet with the Local health Visitor, Midwife or Speech and language Therapist. They may well also be drop in sessions with a representative from Job Centre Plus. If these services are already being delivered within the community elsewhere then the centre will act as an information point and will signpost families to these services rather than recreate additional ones.

- **Economic** – in line with the above, the development will have a positive economic impact on the area in its utilisation of a patch of underutilised space within the grounds of the Primary School.

- **Planning policy** – this development supports the planning policy of development of brown field sites for construction works.

Involvement

During December 2005 local residents were invited to attend a consultation evening in the town centre to look at the proposed plans for Children's Centres. Positive feedback was given and a good understanding was taken
away as to why there was a need to develop a site in the Highfields part of Kettering.

Public questionnaires were given out and the local residents were given a 6 week period to respond to the proposed site. There were no objections to the proposed site being built.

As this site is developing the Children's Centre Manager and the Centre lead will have the responsibility to ensure consultation with the local residents in their community takes place to find out peoples understanding of the building work and about peoples knowledge of what will be provided and the services they would like to see from this site. Evaluations will be drawn up from the results and plans will be made.

Evaluation
In the evaluation process, a number of elements had to be incorporated into the detailed design process, outlined below:-.

The design of the property has to be altered resulting in a creation of a standalone external buggy store not connected to the new extension. This has enabled a reduction in the depth of the new extension so reducing the height of the mono pitch roof and allowing the building to be in better proportion with the surrounding environment. This has also had the benefit of providing a greater amount of natural light into the proposed Head Teachers office within the existing school building.

Design

- **Use** – The construction of the Site Supervisors Store will allow the existing Store to be refurbished to create a new Meeting Room. The main refurbishment works will provide a shared Reception for the Children’s Centre and Nursery along with Office, Counselling Room, Disabled WC & Meeting Room. The existing Dining Room is used by the Nursery School as a combined play area and Dining Area. The proposal is to divide the room into half providing a separate area for Dining and Play. The extension will recover the lost area. The existing servery room is repositioned to allow for a corridor through to the new Pre-School Area. The existing Children's Toilets will remain as existing. Externally the new curved roof will extend, supported on steel columns, to provide a covered play area. The external play area has a dwarf brick wall surround and metal bow topped fencing to provide a safe play environment. Externally tarmac footpaths will be extended / adjusted as necessary plus a pre-formed Buggy Store will be positioned to the front of the existing entrance. The Sure Start Children's Centres which will be accessed from the Shared Reception and located on the left hand side as facing the main reception will become a 'one stop shop', where children 0-5 years old and their families can have
access to integrated services and information. The overall vision will be to ensure every child gets the best start in life and to give parents more choice about how to balance work and family life. The Centre will deliver a carefully planned range of integrated services and will work with parents and service providers to deliver inclusive, accessible and child-friendly services that respond to local need and help children reach their full potential. The Centre will also provide or have links to services which will enable them to meet the core offer for what is nationally recognised as a minimum service which should be available for families. In the future, the Centre will deliver additional services to this core offer should feedback from consultation with the local community show that there is a need, for example baby massage, breastfeeding café or advice on money management. The development sees the internal separation of the Children’s Centre from the Infant School via secure doors, so as to maintain the security of the School when the Children’s Centre is in use out of normal school hours, with both the Children’s Centre and School benefiting from the shared reception and entrance.

- **Amount** – the development sees an extension (80m²). The replacement Store is (24m²) with the External Buggy Store at (6.5m²). The refurbishment section of the project is (180m²).

- **Layout** – the extension layout orientation has been carefully designed in order to maximise natural light opportunities and compliment and the School, so as not to provide conflicting access/egress points. Additional rooflights and windows have been incorporated into the design to replace the areas lost due to the extension. The limitations of the site in terms of existing access to the School and existing below ground services have predetermined the size orientation somewhat, however the design has developed in order to minimise the impact on the surrounding properties.

- **Scale** – the proposed extension consists of a curved metal roof with contrasting brickwork to highlight the structure as a focal point against the existing building. The rear Store will have red facing brickwork and grey flat roof to match the existing building.

- **Landscaping** – a landscaping strip has been positioned in front of the new extension with 4no. new saplings positioned on the existing grass lawn.

- **Appearance** – The existing building consists of red main brickwork with parapet / coping hiding a grey felt flat roof.

  o The proposed extension will contrast this with a grey curved roof with grey metal fascia / verge and soffits. The brickwork will be a red multi with a darker red detail brick to match the existing.
o Windows will be powder coated aluminium windows.
  o The guttering will be hidden in the fascia with grey downpipes.
  o The new Buggy Store has clear plastic sheet covering supported on a powder coated metal framework.

Access

The property design takes account of:-

- **Approach** – The design of the extension sensitively reflects the need to create a welcoming environment for the visitors to the Children's Centre and Nursery but also produces a design which compliments both existing adjacent properties and the overall community ethos.

- **Parking** – There is only Staff Parking at present. With the additional tarmac strip an additional 4no. spaces can be added with provision of a disabled parking bay.

- **Entrances** - within the limits of the site the existing entrance is to be used as a shared reception.

- **Horizontal and Vertical circulation** – the horizontal circulation within the property has been carefully planned (refer above). Vertical circulation is not applicable for this single storey property.

- **Access to all services** – Internally the new extension has been carefully laid-out to maximise use and management. All facilities will maintain the security of the Nursery, school and Children’s Centre whilst still maintaining a friendly and warm environment.

- **Emergency Egress/Alarm Systems and Evacuation Planning** – the design of the extension will ensure and assist evacuation should an emergency need occur. All travel routes have been carefully planned and existing emergency exit options are numerous. Evacuation planning will be recorded, and regularly tested in accordance with schools current procedures.

Philosophy and Approach:
The Children's Centre area has been specifically designed to enable ease of access for people with disability. Access to and internal travel routes within the new extension have been carefully planned to provide ease of access for visitors and can make use of essential facilities. The design of the property is
considered to meet the spirit of the Disability Discrimination Act as well as meeting other regulatory and statutory requirements.

Sources of advice and consultation
- Planning advice from Northamptonshire County Council.
- Full consultation with the Highfield Infant Head teacher to ensure the design of the property meets the safe and essential needs of the Nursery.
- Early consultation with local residents, during consultation evening held in December 2005.
- Public questionnaires were given out and the local residents were given a 6 week period to respond to the proposed site. There were no objections to the proposed site being built.
- Advice from a range of professional groups and bodies – particularly around disabled access and compliance with Building Regulations. During the design process key structural, mechanical/electrical and access professional advice has been sought to ensure the Children’s Centre operates as efficiently as possible.

Nature and impact of environmental constraints
No apparent environmental constraints identified.

Proposed solutions for overcoming identified constraints
N/A

What steps have been taken to ensure this information is made available to building occupiers
Refer above. All key building occupiers have been regularly consulted with and are part of the overall design team. Information has been disseminated to all interested parties for comment and direction on a regularly basis.

Additional material information
N/A

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